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H.B. 5440, AN ACT CONCERNING MEDICAID COVERAGE FOR DIABETES
PREVENTION AND SELF-MANAGEMENT EDUCATION SERVICES
Human Services Committee
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Senator Moore, Representative Abercrombie and Members of the Human Services Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify today in favor of H.B. 5440, An Act Concerning Medicaid Coverage for Diabetes Prevention and Self-Management Education Services. My name is John Cattelan and I am here today on behalf of the Connecticut Alliance of YMCAs. The Alliance represents 22 YMCAs across the state of Connecticut.

The YMCA's Diabetes Prevention Program is a community-based lifestyle improvement program for adults with prediabetes. Its purpose is to empower adults with lasting lifestyle changes that will improve their overall health. Research by the National Institutes of Health has shown that programs like the YMCA's Diabetes Prevention Program can reduce the number of new cases of type 2 diabetes by 58%, and 71% in adults over the age of 60.

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I realize our state is in a fiscal crisis but I want to share with you some of the long term financial and public health implications of not addressing the diabetes as a major health problem in Connecticut.

- In 2012, diabetes and prediabetes resulted in \$3 billion in annual medical costs in Connecticut. (Complications can result in tens of thousands of dollars in medical expenses for one individual.) Indirect costs from lost productivity due to diabetes result in an additional \$1 billion in annual expenses.
- According to the 2015 Connecticut Diabetes Statistics, diabetes is the eighth leading cause of death in Connecticut where 690 deaths were attributed to diabetes as the underlying cause.
- About 186,000 adults in Connecticut have been diagnosed with diabetes, and 93,000 adults are estimated to have undiagnosed diabetes. Older adults, low-income adults, and racial and ethnic minorities have the highest rates of diagnosed diabetes. The chief risk factor for diabetes is obesity. An estimated 25% of Connecticut's adults are obese.
- According to the Connecticut Acute Care Hospital Inpatient Discharge Database, 1.3% of all hospital charges (\$170 million) in 2012 were for

hospitalizations with diabetes as the primary diagnosis, and 17.7% of all hospital charges (\$2.3 billion) in 2012 were for diabetes-related hospitalizations.

Diabetes care is largely self-care, but people with diabetes need education about how to do this. Diabetes Self-Management Education (DSME) is fundamental to diabetes care and thus is recommended by the American Diabetes Association as a standard of care that should be covered by insurance plans.

Diabetes education helps people with diabetes learn how to manage their disease and be as healthy as possible by focusing on seven self-care behaviors: healthy eating, being active, blood sugar monitoring, taking medication (insulin is administered by injection or infusion), problem solving, healthy coping and reducing risks. Diabetes education must meet stringent national standards and is provided at centers recognized by the American Diabetes Association or the American Association of Diabetes Educators.

The YMCA's Diabetes Prevention Program is an affordable, high quality lifestyle change program directly translated from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) Diabetes Prevention Program trial, a clinical study that showed a lifestyle change intervention yielding modest weight loss (5 to 7%) and increased physical activity (up to 150 minutes per week) can reduce the number of new cases of type 2 diabetes in adults by 58% and 71% in adults over the age of 60.

The Connecticut Alliance of YMCAs supports legislation that would require Medicaid in Connecticut to cover DSME. This program is already covered by 32 other states, along with Medicare and private insurance in Connecticut.

In addition, the Alliance requests the Connecticut Department of Social Services apply for a Medicaid Waiver pursuant to Section 1115 of the Social Security Act to cover Diabetes Prevention Programs. Because of the cost of diabetes on Connecticut's health delivery system and the prevalence of Diabetes among minorities, it is important that organizations be reimbursed under Medicaid for providing this vital service.